GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3188
ANSWERED ON:17.12.2015
Flight Delay due to Fog
Khanduri AVSM Maj. Gen. (Retd) Bhuwan Chandra

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether during winters, many domestic and international flights to and from Delhi get cancelled/delayed/diverted due to fog;

(b) if so, the total number of flights cancelled/delayed/diverted as percentage of total scheduled flights in the month of December and January during the last three years and the current year, till date yearwise;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to take proper care of the passengers during such delays etc. and ensure minimal cancellation/delays/diversion of flights during winter due to fog;

(d) whether any studies have been conducted in this regard; and

(e) If so, the details and the outcome thereof along with the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION
(Dr Mahesh Sharma)

(a) to (b) Fog has significant impact on the conduct of flying operations particularly during landing and take-off. As per the data maintained by DGCA, total number of flights cancelled/diverted as percentage of total flights for the month December and January for 2014-15 are as follows:
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No. of Cancellations % of total scheduled flights
42 0.48

No. of Diversions % of total scheduled flights
59 0.68

For previous years' total cancellations/diversions is as follows:
Year No. of Cancellations No of Diversions
2011-12 85 57
2012-13 78 89
2013-14 197 143
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(c) to (e) A Technical Committee set up by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on 09.01.2014 has studied low visibility operations at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, Delhi and has recommended measures to mitigate the problem. Based on the recommendations of the Committee, following decisions have been taken by DGCA for compliance by airlines:

1. All airlines to ensure that aircraft deployed to/from Delhi during low visibility conditions are CAT III complaint and both the commander and co-pilot are also CAT III trained.

2. Only CAT III flight crew to operate the flights to/from Delhi in case weather predictions of CAT III conditions are made by Indian Meteorological Department (IMD). Failing to do so, such operations of the defaulting airline will be stopped to/from Delhi during low visibility conditions.

3. Airlines must take adequate care of providing basic amenities of water and refreshment to passengers during such conditions if the flights are delayed.

4. All stakeholders should have better communication procedure so that level of interaction with passengers increases during the fog and they are aware of flight delays.

5. One representative each from DGCA and IMD will be positioned at Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC), IGI airport who will interact with airlines, Airport Authority of India (AAI) and IGI Airport. IGI airport will organize conference on daily basis wherein fog forecast for the day and next day will be provided by IMD.
Further, in order to minimize the inconvenience to traveling passengers and to ensure safety of operations during Low Visibility period, DGCA has issued instructions to all scheduled domestic airlines as well as airport operators for immediate compliance.